The COMMONWEAL

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The Labor Conventions

THE AFL AND CIO national conventions, both concluded on October 17, are not the kind of public event that should have an immediate news impact (like the Overell trial, or the Rose Bowl game) and then be forgotten. Like an increasing number of political economic conferences, congresses, meetings and elections, the meaning of the labor conventions is not self-evident and their consequences wait to appear. This is not an altogether wholesome development, most likely, but it's one that can't be denied. The alignments of power, the balances of forces and the chains of action are obscured to the degree we talk and act on other bases than objective reason, and use as means to our wordless ends, other persuasion than intellectual argument and direct frankness. And even utilizing all possible reason and honesty, we still are darkened in ignorance proportioned to the enormous scale of the problems weighing on labor and the world.

How is the common public to know the condition and mind of the AFL and the CIO? The resolutions passed, most of them hastily, just under the wire, are few of them very clear and they seem to be given little weight in themselves by anyone, except as possible signs of meanings that do not appear on the open surface. The reports and publicity stress certain words and ideas, but no one but a complete insider knows if the public emphasis really corresponds to the purposes and beliefs of the practically governing groups in the actual conventions.

Take the reports in the newspapers during the final days of the conventions. The great stress was put on political plans: how the CIO was going to develop its PAC, 1,000,000 workers strong, down to regular political club type action on a ward, precinct and block basis; how the AFL was going into the political education business on a million dollar scale (with two millions additional appropriated for things that might turn up). And in the reporting of political projects, the Taft-Hartley law occupied so much the center of the publicity stage that almost everything else was hidden.

The PAC type of activity is potentially most dangerously divisive within unions, locals and units. Flat and negative hatred of the Taft-Hartley law is a very small principle of unity for such union political structures as are talked about. It is not of universal enough interest and importance. Indisputably more important issues are thrust aside by pushing the Taft-Hartley controversy so far front and center: the communist issue with the linked problem of peace; how to deal with inflation; food and housing; resources, conservation, and regional planning; the annual wage, and allotment of profits; social security; ownership and responsibility. All these and many other issues can easily override the Taft-Hartley law in aligning a voter politically.

The very question of the rightness of identifying membership in a given labor union with membership in an all-around political party is vastly more important than the question of repeal or amendment of the Taft-Hartley law.

It is clear this year that both labor union groups have decided against forming a third Party. There is no doubt that increased and clearer unity within the unions on union questions is a prior requirement to the beginning of a serious effort along that line. Then, before the effort ought to take hold in an important national way, there should certainly be a broader and more unified and more important effort to erect a platform for people as whole citizens.

The National Budget

IF THE American people were one person, he'd quite obviously be considered crazy for the way he spends his money, his resources and his work hours. Housing and food are terribly expensive now, certainly. Their costs are inflated. But isn't there a "priority" problem rather separate from an inflation problem? The American people, to judge by what you see and by industrial

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statistics constantly printed and by all the advertising, keep a very very big budget indeed for very low priority items, like cosmetics and liquor and movies and jewelry and other things that a Roman Censor, or a transoceanic Austerity Minister would cut off very quickly indeed.

A chiding of the English, by the English, has just come to hand, which makes the American seem profligate indeed. In the magazine, *Context*, a leaflet of the Catholic Social Guild of Oxford is quoted:

> That we can suffer the income-cuts suggested without detriment to *essentials* of decent sufficiency is suggested in a recent letter to *The Times*. The writer points out that from every pound the British people spend on goods and services, 5s. is spent on food, 2s. 5d. on alcoholic drinks, 2s. on tobacco, 1s. 10d. on clothing and footwear, 1s. 9½d. on rent and rates, 11d. on fuel and light, 10d. on travel, 6½d. on entertainment and 3½d. on reading matter. Clearly there is room for retrenchment. It is for us to enforce it on ourselves in the interests of national survival.

If a stern-sounding distribution of the national pound such as that is only the beginning of austerity, or of sensible budgeting, where, indeed, are we?

De Gaulle Again

WE MUST WAIT another week for the final results of the French municipal elections. When the voting took place this week in the larger cities, four to five million votes were cast. There may be anywhere from ten to sixteen million more votes to be counted when the smaller communities throughout the country vote next week. So it is not all over, and we shall have to wait before we can see how France is divided—in three parts under Caesar—now, unfortunately, in half.

Meanwhile de Gaulle's new "reunion" party has come out suddenly with 33 percent of the votes cast; the communists and the socialists stay more or less where they were (29 percent and 14); Bidault's Popular Republicans are sunk: they polled 10 percent.

De Gaulle appealed to Frenchmen regardless of party to support his total rejection of communists in Russia or in France or moving anywhere between, his insistence on a "strong executive," a France strong and independent, and himself. Naturally this program could not appeal to the communists; it could not appeal to the socialists who have been trying to avoid the creation of a right and a left with nothing in between. Thus, the "reunion" of all Frenchmen could only mean that de Gaulle proposed to take away from the Popular Republicans everyone he possibly could.

The MRP has been a heterogeneous party; it has depended, ambiguously and variably, on de Gaulle himself, since its origins were in the resistance movement; its strength was provided, in small part, by the idealism—Christian Democracy—of some of its leaders; in large part by the votes which came to it confusedly—there was nowhere else to go—from all the moderates, the conservatives, the resigned, the frightened, the patriots, who looked at the Left and shuddered.

De Gaulle did not mind the idealism of the Popular Republicans or their acceptance of various plans for nationalization and reform; he did mind the fact that the party showed a growing impotence, particularly, he accused, in foreign policy. For a long time, increasingly, he embarrassed the party; finally he opposed it; now he has destroyed it.

Unless something extraordinary happens next week de Gaulle will stand as the leader of the anti-communist half of France. Yet the votes he has, the strength he represents, are the same votes, the same strength that existed before the elections. There has been a change in leadership; it is as if something had taken place at a convention; de Gaulle has nominated himself and has got himself elected; the timid, the patriots, the conservatives have told him to go ahead and be strong.

We must wait till next week to count numbers, to read the pitiful statistics of a country divided in two. Because that is the first unhappy meaning of de Gaulle's success. No matter how admirable his policy may be, no matter how sternly republican he may prove to be, there will be half of France mistrusting him.

It is probably not the most perfect time for a showdown between Frenchmen. Quite apart from French communists, about whom it is possible to talk too much, there are the old enduring strains between French social classes, the historic suspicion of a personal leadership seeking a strong executive department in the government of the nation. On the other hand there are all the Frenchmen who, having profited by one revolution, fear above all another and, therefore, mistrust trade unions, workers, and the poor. De Gaulle's success inevitably makes these tensions greater. The barrier he seeks to erect against communism he may find set up in French streets with Frenchmen on each side of them.

Potential Symbols

THE PRESENT QUIET in New York harbor provides a strange contrast to the pyrotechnics of Joe Curran's successful battle against Communist control of the National Maritime Union in another sector of the city. On days when the seasonal fog is thick, such shipping as there is drops anchor; and even when the water sparkles on the bay and up the rivers, few ocean-going vessels appear on the horizon or tie up at

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their snug river berths. Sometimes for three days running the papers have no mail and passenger arrivals to report.

It is not surprising, of course, that the vessels of many types and many nations which used to provide such elements of expectancy, color and unsettlement for a daily ferry ride, have not returned in any numbers yet. But what has become of our own wartime merchant fleet of over five thousand? A few of them are rusting up the Hudson, while larger contingents of our slower, least usable cargo vessels idle huddled together on widely separated estuaries: in the James River (Va.), at Mobile, Ala., and on Suisin Bay (near San Francisco). The best freighters have been sold or chartered to private firms.

Few impressive modern passenger liners now sail the seas under the American flag. If I mention the *America* of the United States Lines, several trim ships of the Grace Line which, with two or three Moore-McCormack liners, represent the United States so adequately on the Caribbean and along both South American coasts, plus a handful of Matson and President liners out on the Pacific I have cited most of them.

All sorts of citizens are unhappy about our merchant marine's present low estate. Army and Navy authorities first of all, for they call inadequate shipping facilities (as they were in 1917 and 1942) one of the worst elements in the nation's unpreparedness. Then there are business interests which believe that our own vessels should handle a good portion of America's sizable foreign trade; specifically there are shipbuilders who put up powerful arguments for keeping skills and facilities at top efficiency by means of a continuing program. It is estimated that 95 percent of current merchant ship construction the world over is for the fleets of other nations.

Supposing that we had the opportunity to chart the course of development of the American merchant fleet, what would be our objectives? As far as preparedness goes there would have to be an adequate number of passenger vessels, tankers and dry cargo freighters to supply the transports, naval auxiliaries and other bottoms—in conjunction with the partially available fleets of Britain, Holland, Norway, Denmark and other maritime nations—that would be calculated as necessary to keep the supply lines open. And it is important to remember here that American vessels have not had to, and would not have to, do it alone.

When it comes to planning the scope of a new American merchant fleet, the factor of competition comes into play. It should not be a national ambition to dominate the seas. Nations whose prosperity is so largely dependent upon the success of their carrying trade, must not, in our own interest, have their prosperity jeopardized by the expansiveness of our competition. That happily is also Secretary Harriman's opinion. The fact that in order to maintain American standards of wages and hours we have to subsidize our ships should not tempt us to exploit this device to the point of squeezing out foreign competitors. For international trade we should aim at only a token fleet. That is one reason why the suggestion of a large domestic fleet operating in American coastal waters embodies a partial answer to the difficulty. It also suggests appealing travel possibilities.

At one of the recent shipping conventions Admiral Mills proposed that the United States construct two new transatlantic liners, presumably of the *Elizabeth* class, for the double purpose of administering some concentrated vitamins to our failing shipbuilders and to serve in foreign waters as symbols of American prowess. The wisdom of competing in terms of size, speed and lavishness is questionable, if we are talking in terms of symbols. And with the growth of air travel it is doubtful whether it is any longer practicable. Those traversing the Atlantic in the comparative leisure of a week's crossing will never attain past numbers. Therefore, combination freight and passenger vessels of the Grace Line size and type would comprise a much surer bet. Ships which are preeminent for design, ingenuity, efficiency and good lines would be far more effective as American symbols than one or two towering *Leviathans*. The virtue has gone out from sheer bulk.

The object is a continuing national construction program of moderate size vessels to keep shipbuilders employed and in trim and supply "crack" vessels for the seven seas to represent this country adequately. These ships should also embody the best possible working conditions, sound worker organizations and management-employee relationships. Such a program and such conditions would constitute a vital and non-military element in attaining a state of preparedness which would discourage attack and not stimulate production of armaments elsewhere.

The state of our shipping must primarily be viewed, also, in relationship to transportable goods and people. Out in the Pacific, for instance, the immediate prospect is that shipping will be stimulated by the economic reconstruction of the Philippines, with new trade with Japan soon to follow. In general, expansion of our merchant fleet assumes a new high level in vigorous two-way or multilateral international trade and the most extensive visiting between the various peoples. It is, thus, intimately tied in with the prosperity of other lands, upon which rests the maintenance of our own. And if the American people can produce and fully utilize sufficient numbers of the type of vessel referred to here, we might regain the maritime prestige of the days of our clipper ships.

EDWARD S. SKILLIN.

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Mexico on the Move

James A. Magner

THE ADDRESS of President Miguel Alemán of Mexico in early September on "the state of the nation," if not filled with the customary oratory of the Revolution, has had the singular merit of admitting hard facts to the people, who were already aware of them. Alemán has succeeded to the bonded indebtedness of previous administrations, incurred by public works and other less tangible expenditures. He has had to face a national economic recession, due to the end of war orders for Mexican industry. Problems of an insecure dollar balance, inadequate agricultural production, and the ravages of the hoof and mouth disease among the cattle of the country, have further added to his worries. And, according to many observers, it now falls to his lot to liquidate also the lingering Mexican Revolution.

So far as the national debt and problems of current expenses are concerned, it is obvious that the Mexican Government must find ways and means of increasing its revenues. Attention has been called to the limping system of taxation and the urgent need, not of increasing the assessments, but of actually collecting the taxes already established by law. According to Ramon Beteta, Secretary of the Treasury, the nation collects less than one-sixth of the taxes due. It is perfectly true that, comparing the percentages, particularly on income and industrial taxes, as well as efficiency of collection, in the United States, Mexicans have a very meagre idea of what taxation means.

Prior to this, however, is the problem of production. It is now generally recognized that the agrarian reform has reached the end of its distributivist phase. Practically all the large estates have been broken up, most of them without indemnity to the owners. The next step must be to provide guarantees to the owners of farm land, whether privately held in small ranches or held communally in the agrarian groups known as *ejidos*. In his address, President Alemán declared: "We must work and produce . . . but so long as our economy remains anemic, we can only alleviate the disease but not cure it completely."

More specifically, this means that private ownership, so far as it exists, must be protected. Farmers and owners of farm land are not going to improve their property or invest in production if they have the feeling, and in many cases the certainty, that their land will be taken from them the minute it gives signs of value. As a result of this situation, hundreds of thousands of acres of potentially productive land are now lying idle.

On the other hand, much remains to be done to bring the *ejidal* production up to the desired levels. Whether the *ejido,* roughly, communal production, is "the way out" for the Indian farmers still remains to be seen. If the system is to be given a fair chance, the politicians must get out of the management of the *ejidos* and out of the banks of *ejidal* credit. So long as the *ejido* remains a tool of political management and graft as well as a constant threat to adjoining private properties, the agrarian economy of Mexico will remain in a turmoil. If the *ejidos* and private property cannot be made to work together, through basic guarantees and honest administration, the outlook is extremely dour. After thirty years of revolution and "land reform," Mexico is still obliged to import much of its basic foodstuffs.

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To accentuate the farm problem, the *fiebre aftosa* or hoof and mouth disease constitutes an economic threat of the first dimension. "None of our problems," according to Alemán, "can compare in importance with the spread of *aftosa* among the cattle." To a large extent, this is an international problem, inasmuch as the United States is interested in having every precaution taken to prevent the spread of the disease north of the Rio Grande. For this reason, our government has matched the expenditures of the Mexican Government, dollar for dollar, already aggregating a total of $18,000,000 between the two countries, in combatting the disease. In view of the extent of the problem, however, involving an anti-*aftosa* campaign of possibly five years and a total expenditure of $150,000,000, it is obvious that the entire Mexican budget will be imperiled unless the United States is willing to assume the major share of the expenses.

This campaign has already proved extremely costly in many communities and may result in a radical change in the agrarian system of Mexico. Up to this time, no practical method of stamping out the disease has been found besides that of the "sanitary rifle"—kill, burn, and bury. This procedure has been necessary, not only for the cattle, but for other domestic animals and fowl as well. Of particular concern has been the loss of oxen,

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which are still principally used in the cultivation of small tracts. The importation of mules to supplant oxen has been slow and costly; and whereas oxen will forage for themselves, the mule must be fed grain, which Mexico lacks in sufficient quantity, or else be given pasturage from land now needed for cultivation. An endeavor is being made to secure tractors, a move which may create as many problems as it solves. In the meantime, there is a rising tide of resentment against the campaign, which has ruined many small farmers; and cooperation is essential for eventual success.

On the industrial front, Mexico has temporarily solved most of its strike problems, but it faces the problem of securing machinery and technical equipment. If this difficulty is acute in the United States, which produces its own tools, it is far more accentuated in Mexico, which must import practically all of its machines for mass production. Moreover, a general inflation paralleling that of the United States has shot the prices of processed goods, as well as those of foods in the city markets, beyond the purchasing power of the masses and has created a serious situation for industry whose foreign markets have dried up with the end of war.

During the war, the United States purchased practically all of Mexico's industrial output, to the point that Mexico was importing from the United States many of the products which normally it would have created for home consumption. The funds thus accumulated, however, were held as credits, originally aggregating $385,000,000, in New York banks. At the end of the war, there was an immediate raid on these funds through large-scale buying in Mexico of American-made goods such as automobiles and luxury items. In order to conserve its dollar balance, the Mexican Government under Alemán, after conference with experts of the United States, has temporarily halted the importation of goods designated as luxuries, and is now seeking ways and means of setting up local production, through assembly plants and the like, to substitute and make provision for commodities in this field.

While this seems to be a sound move to conserve the nation's credit abroad, it has stirred up a good deal of unfavorable reaction among groups affected by the embargo and already critical of the government. There is an almost general disillusionment in the Revolution, particularly in view of the fact that, whereas Utopia has not come for the masses, the older Revolutionary generals and the new Revolutionary politicians have become ostentatiously wealthy, with splendid houses in the capital, ranches and other properties in the country, automobiles and general evidences of having done well for themselves in the process of economic reform.

It is a common belief that much of the personnel of the Avila Camacho régime were extremely corrupt. Hope was expressed that the situation would improve under Alemán, because of his announcement that the government would be placed in the hands of experts prepared by knowledge and experience in their respective fields. On every side, however, one hears the same complaints as before. Observers point out that the "Red" elements of the government, which dominated the scene during the presidency of Cardenas and survived to some extent under Avila Camacho, have been largely eliminated. A "red fringe," however, is still alleged to be represented by such men as the Sub-Secretary of Economy Parra, Alejandro Carillo, Secretary of the Interior, Oribe de Alba, Secretary of Hydraulic Works, and Mario Souza, Secretary of the Department of Agriculture.

Disillusionment and resentment, similar to that expressed for the "Revolutionary millionaires," is everywhere evident also as regards the leaders of organized labor, including Vicente Lombardo Toledano. The latter has recently put himself to the task of developing support, particularly among left-wing youth, through the formation of a *Partido Popular* (Popular Party). But his obvious connections with the Soviet plus his display of personal wealth, evidenced in an elaborate residence, have notably lowered his prestige even among his union groups, which are breaking up into various warring camps. Relative to the high-handed and arbitrary power exercised by various unions towards their own members as well as towards others, it is of interest to note that, by recent judgment of the Mexican Supreme Court, unions may now be compelled to reimburse members who have been unjustly ejected. Despite jurisdictional strife and certain communistic leanings, there may also be observed in the unions a definite trend towards the objective of social justice as outlined in the Papal Encyclicals and as opposed to the Marxist doctrine of class warfare.

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In the field of religion, it is immediately clear that the Catholic Church enjoys a larger measure of freedom than at any previous time since the era of General Calles. Many churches which had been closed for years are again open. There is everywhere a desire to clean and restore those which had been abandoned, and everywhere one finds a sentiment of warmth and security in Catholic worship. In Mexico City, the Archbishop takes an active part in social and civic affairs and enjoys the good natured gibes of the journalists and cartoonists who are obviously pleased with his democratic spirit and are glad to count him among the outstanding personalities of the country.

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Catholic education, particularly in the secondary schools and colleges, has assumed again an important position, to the point that various Catholic schools are affiliated with the National Autonomous University. The public schools are still largely influenced by socialistic ideas, but the counteracting influence of the private schools cannot be denied. Protestant churches and congregations are to be found in many cities functioning with apparent freedom; but the threat of anything like a wholesale clash with the Catholic Church and a large Protestant campaign appears to have been averted.

This does not mean, however, that the Catholic Church feels itself on absolutely certain footing. None of the anti-clerical provisions of the Constitution have been revoked, nor has the Church been given any guarantees beyond those of current connivance on the part of the present government. Considerable publicity was given in the Mexican newspapers to the interview of President Alemán with Cardinal Spellman, when the former visited the United States, but nothing tangible has come of the rumors circulated at that time. Public religious processions are held in various places, but Archbishop Martinez has been scrupulous in going on record as cautioning the clergy against any infringement of the law in this and in other respects which limit demonstrations of faith outside the actual church edifices.

Two nationally organized civic groups continue to work for the revision of anti-Catholic laws and endeavor to combat communist tendencies, namely, the National Sinarchist Union and the *Accion Nacional* (National Action) Party. The Sinarchists, at the time of the writing of this article, still remained split into two groups, a fact which has notably reduced their influence. *Accion Nacional* likewise suffered a division of opinion as the result of its expulsion last July of Achilés Elorduy from the Party, because of his anti-religious utterances. Nevertheless, in the judgment of this writer, both of the above named groups have an important rôle to play in the formation of public opinion and will exercise a decisive part in the reconstruction of Mexico if they can resist the divisive tactics of their enemies.

It is of the utmost importance for the future of the Church in Mexico that it enlarge its outlook and activities from devotion and worship to include instruction and social work. The difficulties in the way are enormous. But the fact remains that the Church in Mexico is largely a woman's church. Moreover, the sociological aspects of the Church's mission and the intellectual aspects of faith have been obscured to a considerable extent by an exclusively mystical piety on the one hand and by a fear born of persecution on the other. The failure of the Church in Mexico to grasp the importance of practical moral as well as doctrinal instruction from the pulpit, as a regular program, may also be noted. As a result, the influence of the Church among business and professional men, as well as among political elements, is comparatively small. Until this chasm has been bridged, the probability of liquidating the old sectarian Liberalism and of revising the anti-Catholic laws will remain remote.

The only answer to these problems consists in a determined study of objectives and a careful gearing of methods to the social situation special to Mexico, plus the coordination and clear directives of its leaders. Men as well as women must lend their support to make the social mission of the Church effective. The general atmosphere of Mexico today is such as to lend itself to peaceful and constructive action.

This spirit of determination to face issues on the basis of realistic analysis and common effort is nowhere better exemplified than in the reporting of the newspapers. There is still a fringe of hysterical journalism in Mexico, but by far and large the desire to cooperate with the government has supplanted a spirit of chronic opposition which has, perhaps rightly in the past, characterized so wide a segment of Mexican opinion. Civil war is giving way to common effort. Given the minimum of opportunity and a reasonable amount of intelligence and honesty in its public officials, Mexico will justify its tradition as a Christian nation and move definitely forward in the direction of democracy.

When Imagination Lags

When imagination lags
In the strawberry fields of East Nemasket,
I unloose angels from burlap bags
And lower God in a canvas basket.

The black men, citizens of toil,
Look up and say I'm rather wild.
They want a metaphysical spoil
Comprehensible to a child.

Brothers of intellect, I say,
Count Marx and Freud on your ten fingers.
And if you think I'm making gay
With your stupid life that so malingers,

Remember that wages are a sin
You must avoid if you would be free.
But they, who are to the jackass kin,
(See Evolution) have little of me.

So when imagination lags
In the strawberry fields of East Nemasket,
I tie the angels in burlap bags
And square my mind in a one quart basket.

JOHN PORTER HEYMANN.

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Conversation in the Heat of the Day*

ANNE FREMANTLE

THE TELEGRAM arrived the day it rained. For six weeks the sun had blazed down on us, and on our thousands of fellow-trippers, crowding the little Breton seaside village. It was so hot one could not walk barefoot on the sand, and the corn was shriveled in the ears, and even the tiny grapes were raisins before they were ripe. Everyone was praying for rain to save the potatoes—it would be too late now to help the other crops. There wasn't a bed, much less a room, anywhere on the coast, for it was the first time since the war that the French had been allowed to go to the seaside, and they were taking full advantage of the permission. The trains from Paris had not even standing room, though running in triplicate. Luckily for us, we had a tent—no groundsheets nor mackintoshes.

"Am at Feneu chez Tivoli, Ménasce" we read, and telegraphed back "Coming," although we didn't know where Feneu was. The postmaster showed us on a map of Maine-et Loire, and we set off, damply, on our bicycles.

"It's near Angers. That Marcel Tivoli was a great figure in the Resistance," said the postmaster. "Anyone will tell you where he lives."

The schoolmistress was more detailed in her information. "Before I married I used to teach at Feneu," she said. "Those Tivolis are a most wonderful family. When the Gestapo came for them, M. Tivoli told his wife and seven children, 'Above all, do not hate. If you hate them, they have won, and you . . . we . . . have lost.' His mother was taken to Germany, and died there; they first raped his sister, and then tortured her to death. But he and his wife are back now in the castle, with the children."

Rather bedraggled, we reached the Tivolis' to find a warm, gentle, welcome, though we were complete strangers, and five out of our party of six were under twelve years old. After a hot meal, we were shown where to pitch our tent, and then we sat around Father de Ménasce in the garden. He had flown from America to Rome two and a half years before with M. Jacques Maritain, and we had hardly heard from him since. Now he told us "I've started seven schools for social workers in seven big Italian cities—Rome, Milan, Naples, Turin, Genoa, Florence and Pisa. We managed to get going just a jump ahead of the communists: we opened a week earlier."

"What *can* the communists in Italy want schools of social workers for?" I asked, amazed. "That's hardly their line of country, is it?"

"It is not, but with all the wire pulling and log rolling in the world, I was only able to get out of the Vatican one-fiftieth of the money that the communists are spending on their schools. Each one is costing them over seven times more than mine; each one of their students gets over seven times what mine do. And mine can't afford to study full time on the tiny scholarships I can offer; they work only in the evenings, when they are tired out from a full day's work on very inadequate rations, and exhausted by the transportation difficulties. For example, I myself have to travel for four hours daily to and from my office, yet I live with my mother only just outside Rome."

"But why, in the first place, should the social services attract the communists at all?" I persisted.

"Do you recall how Péron came to power?" Father Ménasce countered. "He was simply Minister of Social Services. All grants of assistance, of extra milk or cod liver oil, etc., went through him; he had the appointing of special workers, of social service officials, in every town and village, and he took every advantage of his power over his nominees. The communists have followed exactly the same tactics in Italy. They almost succeeded in getting a party member made Minister for Social Services in Rome; luckily their plot was spotted and scotched in time, but, since the failure of this scheme of theirs they have started these schools for training social workers. And they do a beautiful job. I must hand it to them. I wish my candidates or my courses were half as good as theirs. But because of fascism, everything got off on the wrong foot in Italy. The social services got started in entirely the wrong way: they got off to a political start, instead of just growing. In England, they began by being individual or religious, and gradually had to be handed over to the state when they outgrew their first framework. In America they were local, regional, at the first. In Italy today even the Vatican is simply flooded with communist propaganda! Actually, so far I have got most of the material for my courses from the British Council, which is doing a beautiful job in Rome. The American propaganda isn't much use."

"If the commies are doing such a good job," I hazarded "is it not, perhaps, a pity that we're so suspicious of them? He that is not against me is with me."

Father de Ménasce threw up horrified hands. "Good work! They do only one work: propaganda. For example, they took 60,000 children from the poorest slums of the southern

* Another fragment from a travel diary.

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cities, the worst bombed and the most famished, and sent them for six weeks to live fatly in the country, planted out upon specially hand-picked Red families. As a result, in no time at all, they had 60,000 well set up, healthy, well instructed little communists—a good cheap addition to the communist youth groups! Again, in Apulia, where hardly anyone can read, and everyone votes for symbols, each party has its sign. Guess what symbol the communists chose? The Sacred Heart! True, there was a tiny 'C.P.' in one corner, but since the voters were mostly analphabetics, nearly everyone was deceived!"

I drank another cup of bitter, sugarless, milkless ersatz coffee. "You are grown very political, Father," I said.

He sighed. "Alas, in Rome, in Italy, in all Europe today, there is only politics. Endless cabals, endless lobbying, never ending shuffling and jockeying for minor positions, perpetual bitterness. You know how keen I was to get back to Rome, to Europe? Now my friends all rag me because I am so determinedly pro-American. I preach America to them in season and out of season! It seems to me Europe has lost all sense of dialogue. There is no conversation, only an endless stream of individuals making endless monologues. No one listens to what anyone else says, or answers them; each waits only for the other to lose his breath, or for themselves to regain theirs. Then off they go again."

"Let's hear more about your schools," I begged.

Father lit a cigarette and said: "Everything is needed. We are at the beginning. And I must say the Government are very good. They want proper health facilities, holidays with pay, pensions, free hospitalization for the workers, family allowances, all the things that are commonplaces now in England, for example. But just the paper work, the gathering of statistics, the visiting, the filing, is such a tremendous job, when you have no precedents, or when such precedents as you have were done all wrong. I've such a lot to learn myself. I'm hoping to come to America next year and do a course. I'm praying I may be sent over to the World Conference of Social Workers at Atlantic City next spring. And then I hope to do some begging for my poor schools."

"How about France?" I asked Madame Tivoli. "Is what Father Ménasce says about Italian communism true here?"

She looked at Paul, her nineteen-year-old son, who is training to be a doctor as the first step to becoming a missionary priest. Then she said "Paul shall answer that. The children know far more than I do about the situation here. Since we came back, I've hardly left the grounds. I am cook, and Marcel is a farmer only."

Paul said: "It is because France is so communist that we live as we do. That we *must* live as we do, in utter poverty, without servants, working the farm ourselves, living on what we grow. Our parents are become as the poorest of the local peasants. Father and I get up at 4:30—it was earlier today because the threshing machine came to us. We study when we can, but we have *got* to show our neighbors that we, Christians, can live as dedicated lives as the communists, that what we live by is as living as their faith. Communism is a tremendous challenge to us in France today, because the communists are such *good* communists, because they live their faith wholly, entirely. Unless our faith is greater, unless our love is greater, they will win—they have won."

I told him how the postmaster and the schoolmistress had spoken of them.

Marcel smiled sadly. "I never was of the Resistance," he said. "Where I was it was not possible. But Paul is right. From the brief unity of purpose and effort that Catholics and communists shared in the concentration camps, and in the Resistance, has come an abiding realization of *how* good we've got to be. For if these others, their communism being evil, know how to give good gifts, how much more is expected of us?"

To the outsider the most truly astonishing fact is that both Catholics and communists operate in France today on 200 grammes of bread daily (four small slices) and on a minimum of sugar, butter and meat, with no milk at all, unless, like the Tivolis, they farm.

So men and women—

> Like the pine trees, unprevailing
> Yet not for wind nor avalanche turning back—

still prove that, even under such conditions, they live neither for, nor by, bread alone.

Mass Manslaughter and the Mass

MICHAEL J. DEACY

"IN ESSENTIAL things let there be unity; in non-essential things let there be liberty; and in all things let there be charity." If this ideal were more widely practiced, then one might hope, like the Psalmist, to behold the *justice* of militarism and the *peace* of pacifism kissing each other in an embrace of charity. Let the pacifist admit the essential truth that a just war is possible, and let the militarist renounce the non-essential fixation that a just war is the only security against aggression. Charity will do the rest.

In fact it seems that not only is a just war possible, but an unjust war is practically impossible—*as far as the consciences of participants be concerned.* Let the sceptic try to find even one war, in all history, in which the co-operators on all sides were not convinced of the justice

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of their respective war aims. Not even the moral leaders of any warring faction, using the principles for a just war, were able to discern injustice on their own side. Else they would have warned their spiritual children to refuse cooperation in the war. Hence the consoling lesson of history that whatever may be the material morality of war, the formal morality of legal mass manslaughter is always just.

Strangely enough, *unjust* violence is on a much smaller scale, such as local gangsterism and private gun fights. Indeed the combined forms of unjust violence throughout all history, including murder, rape, arson, pillage, and banditry, when compared with the effects of just violence, seem like a teapot tempest beside a tornado. Who will deny, then, that the road to hell on earth is paved with violently good intentions?

Just Violence. Here, surely, is a redeeming feature in the history of fallen man. The pathetically earnest good intentions of the participants on all sides of the military conflicts! They were not only convinced of the justice of their respective war efforts. They even believed that it was a dictate of God's will to carry on the slaughter for Caesar. No wonder a great prelate of World War I eulogized the slain combatants as martyrs. On such a basis, our century must eclipse any previous epoch as a Golden Age of Martyrs — Retaliatory Martyrs!

The compulsory alliance between violence and virtue is an interesting feature of pre-Christian morality. For example, in the Old Testament, not only was war against the wicked mandatory, but even non-combatants were obligatory military objectives. The old man and the suckling babe, as well as the enemy soldier, were ordered to be slain, as inseparably linked with the evil of their people.

Yet for those who regard Christian morality as a supernatural code, above but not against the Natural Law, there is significance in the absence of any New Testament command to use force even for a good cause. Indeed the Sermon on the Mount seems to suggest that nonviolence, or passive resistance, is a better way to overcome the evil-doer.

Such an impression, given by the Divine Preacher is strengthened by His own practice in the Passion. For in the Sacrifice of Redemption, which is the Sacred Passion, the actions of Jesus were in stark contrast to the violence inflicted on Him by His enemies. With infinite Charity, without any retaliation, other than mercy, He endured bloodshed till the last drop of precious Blood was separated from His Sacred Body. Is not the *lex talionis* of the New Law to return good for evil? (Matthew V). With good reason, then, the Vicar of Christ declared that "Christian Charity is not content with loving our enemies. It also requires that we treat them with *kindness.*" (Benedict XV in *Pacem Dei*). Killing them with kindness? Seriously, however, the very first Papal Encyclical taught that ". . . Unto this are you called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving you an example that you should follow His steps. Who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth. Who, when He was reviled, did not revile: when He suffered, He threatened not: but delivered Himself to him that judged Him unjustly." (1 Peter 2:21;23)

This patient endurance of unjust violence by Christ and His followers conquered their enemies. For while the perennial active bloodshed inflicted by the righteous on the wicked simply generated a vicious circle of physical force, the voluntary Victim of The Cross became the invincible Victor of the Resurrection. The blood of Christian Martyrs (non-retaliatory martyrs!) became the seed of multiplied Christians, rising like Our Lord, from the tombs of the catacombs.

On Resurrection Sunday, when the Prince of Peace greeted His apostles with the blessing of peace, He showed them His own willingly accepted wounds, rather than trophies of wounds inflicted upon His enemies. Could this gesture explain the failure of modern Christians to win peace by wounding their enemies?

While the Ascension added heavenly acceptance to this new economy of power in patience, it did not remove completely from mankind the Perpetual Victim and the Victor. For Holy Mass includes not only the passion, but also the resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ.

★

There is offered in Mass not only the voluntary Victim of violence but also the invincible Victor over violence, the risen and heavenly Head of a redeemed race. Hence the members of that redeemed race cannot afford to ignore the strategy preached in the Sermon on the Mount, practiced in the passion, proved in the resurrection, accepted by Heaven in the ascension, shown forth in the Mass. To gain a *Christian* victory over vicious violence, one must become its voluntary victim.

The tinkling Mass bell, therefore, is not an echo of the soldier's banging hammer driving nails into Christ crucified. Holy Mass perpetuates not the bloody violence of Our Lord's enemies, which is past, and cannot be repeated on His glorified Humanity. This *unbloody sacrifice* continues the action of the Savior Himself in the Sacrifice of the Cross. While the hammer will never again strike the Son of God, the bell will unceasingly sound the application of Calvary at countless points of space and time.

For just before His sufferings began, the Lamb of God, foreshadowed by the Paschal lamb, instituted a new sacrificial rite, whereby under the separated appearances of bread and wine, He might (Apoc. 5:6) "stand as if slain," and forever offer His Body and Blood as the living Sign of that Cross, on which *once* were to be separated His Body and Blood in a bloody offering.

For the Mass Christian, then, there is a daily Real Presence of that new and eternal testament, which has emancipated God's people from the servitude of righteous force as the *only* security against organized evil. No longer can Caesar claim the slavery of soldiery as indispensably among his things. Pagan patriotism must become Christian patriotism by fitting into the universal harmony of Gospel Charity—which binds, in the same way, both nations and individuals (cf. Encyclical *Pacem*

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Dei of Benedict XV). Here indeed is an instance of Our Lady's Magnificat message: "He hath put down the mighty from their seat, and hath exalted the humble." (Luke 1:52).

So conscious of this Emancipation Proclamation was Saint John Chrysostom that he wrote: "Jesus sent His disciples into a *new* kind of *warfare*. Therefore He directed them 'to show the meekness of lambs even against wolves—for I will manifest My Power when the wolves are conquered by the lambs. To change the minds and souls of enemies is certainly a greater work than to kill them. We ought to be ashamed, then, to rush, like wolves, against our adversaries. Even against a thousand wolves we conquer—as long as we are lambs. But if we act like wolves, we are defeated, because then we lose the help of the Good Shepherd. For He supports sheep—not wolves." (Breviary Homily, June 11).

Not only wolves, but even a wild bear can be tamed by this new kind of warfare. For the same tactics, recommended by Saint John Chrysostom, have been suggested by another bishop, for the modern menace of Moscow:

> "The Christian attitude toward communism can be summed up in two words: Clarity and Charity.
>
> *Clarity*: Confronting the fact that communist doctrine and Christian doctrine manifest their incompatibility, and that accord is impossible even on the plane of practical action, when the expression or affirmation of doctrine is involved.
>
> *Charity*: Communists are men. They are our brothers. We must love them in the manner of Christ, with all our hearts, and if need be, even to the giving of our lives." (Most Rev. Pierre Théas, Bishop of Montauban, France)

Christ lovingly giving His life for His enemies, while their soldiers were taking His life, has made the cross the supreme sign of charity. Clarity of thought sees the Mass showing forth, for our imitation, this manner of Christ giving His life on the Cross, *not* the military manner of taking life by the Cross. Hence the Mass is like a filter, bringing to the here and now our Lord and His Cross—minus the military violence of Good Friday. Viewed in this light, Holy Mass is a manifesto of mercy as contrasted to militarism. It calls for the fourteen works of mercy from the members of that Head, Whose mercy is contemplated in the fourteen Stations of the Cross. Infinitely superior to the ancient sacrifices, of which Jesus said, "I will have mercy, and not sacrifice" (Matthew 5:13); the Mass is a perfect union of mercy and sacrifice. Its benefit to the Christian, however, can be impeded in the degree that its message of mercy is neglected.

Applied to the every day reality of human relationships, then, the Mass means a continual reminder to anticipate the Last Judgment by the Fourteen Works of Mercy, even to the *giving* of *our lives* for friend and foe, should such a sacrifice be necessary. Negatively the Mass supports a refusal to cooperate in any activity opposed to the works of mercy—a refusal which may well replace just warfare with welfare, and righteous armsbearing with almsgiving.

As Pope Pius XII stated on June 2, 1947, to the College of Cardinals: "For those who see things in the light of the supernatural, there is no doubt that even in the most serious conflicts of human and national interest, there is always room for a peaceful settlement." Here is high sanction for a Christian peace plan based on the mercy manifesto of the Mass—beginning with the fourteeen works of mercy, and excluding any action opposed to any one of these fourteen.

If Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Peace Points failed to prevent World War II, may not the failure be traced to a reliance exclusively upon rulers, rather than upon the conscience of individuals? On the other hand, the Fourteen Peace Points of Christianity cannot fail completely, as long as even one man of good will is ready to join the Victim of the Mass in returning mercy for the obedient violence of Caesar's soldiers.

So, unless men of good will are certain that the peace on earth, promised by the angels, can be promoted *only* by the mass manslaughter of just wars, they may well refuse to participate in just wars. To replace the mass manslaughter of just wars, by the Mass Manifesto of Mercy, let men of good will—

1. Feed the hungry
2. Give drink to the thirsty
3. Give homes to the homeless
4. Clothe the naked
5. Care for the sick
6. Relieve or release prisoners
7. Bury the dead
8. Console the sorrowful
9. Give information to those needing it
10. Counsel the perplexed
11. Lead sinners away from their faults
12. Bear injustices patiently
13. Forgive all injuries
14. Pray for the living and the dead.

When these Fourteen Points of Mercy bring the masses to the Mass, the talking points of communism will have no meaning for the masses.

Communications

SUMMER OF YOUTH

Sunnyside, Wash.

TO the Editors: Bob Rambusch's letter brought back old memories of the days before all the real trouble, i.e., 1933, when French, German, Austrian and other Continental youth movements were not yet tools of a political machine—a state to which they were degraded by Stalin, Hitler, Mussolini and their ilk. Naturally I am most familiar with the German Catholic youth movement. We used to have glorious annual events as the one in Prague, minus the political ingredient and the advertising features so visible in Prague. This non-political attitude was perhaps one of the reasons why all these fine, idealistic movements went down ingloriously.

But to give a partial answer to Bob Rambusch: I would not blame the State Department. The reason lies not with officialdom but with our own youth. In America we have no youth movement to compare with the

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former European youth movements. I don't know if it is still true, but in 1932 the Boy Scouts in New York were a subdivision of the charities offices, which obviously meant that the authorities looked on scouting as a sort of glorified "child care." The scouts accepted this—what a difference in mentality with, e.g., France's self-propelling scouting, *Compagnons de St. François,* and many other organizations?

Maybe this is a blessing in disguise, I don't know. We must not forget that all European youth movements were a rebellion against the older, bourgeois generation in the name of honesty, truthfulness, naturalness and autonomy of youth, giving youth a permanent and proper value in itself.

American youth until now has not rebelled in this fashion. I fear it will now. Yet even now the average youngster still wants to succeed, get ahead, work in order to play and settle down in peace. The two wars and the depression shook this comfortable, and apparently eternal pattern. But convention, new booms, the radio-and-magazine-induced "philosophy" of life, the accent on youth even in portly business men and "girls" of fifty in printed dresses—see Helen Hopkinson's—have changed the meaning of the word "youth" which with us is a physical, not an intellectual, condition.

To make it short: If you think that we made a poor showing in Prague it is the fault of youth. In America a government-organized youth show would be a farce. If young people want to compete with those poor young Charlie McCarthies of Stalin and Tito the American way, they must rig it all up themselves.

The Rev. H. A. REINHOLD.

THE CENSORSHIP IN EIRE

Eire

TO the Editors: I beg the courtesy of your paper to reply to Mr. O'Reilly. He accuses me of slander and mischievous intent. Neither accusation is true.

I am well aware that Professor Magennis is now dead. But he was still very much alive at the time of the debate I described. And that was the last public debate on the subject of the censorship. And I attacked him, not in his private life, in which I have not the slightest interest, but in his public life. The *de mortuis* tag may be excellent in the former case, but does not hold in the latter. His spirit lives on. The Censorship Board continues with its work without halt or hindrance. I held, and still hold, that a man who cannot distinguish literature from pornography is "addlepated, capable of seeing indecency where there is none, and emotionally adolescent." And that goes for the others as well. I judged Professor Magennis not by his private life but by his public utterances. And, as Mr. O'Reilly points out, he was unknown outside his own country. The men he censored are not.

Mr. O'Reilly puts forward the names of five writers who have escaped the censorship ban. Only one of these is a novelist and he is not a novelist of any repute. The other two whose reputations have gone outside the borders of this country are Seamus O'Sullivan and T. C. Murray. T. C. Murray is not a novelist but a playwright, a man of intense but circumscribed vision. Seamus O'Sullivan is a poet and essayist, whose essays concern themselves mainly with *belles lettres* and are unlikely to have a popular appeal. The Board of Censors does not concern itself with the poets, except in the one case I quoted, Mr. Frank O'Connor's translation of the "Midnight Court." The banning of Kate O'Brien's "Land of Spices" was a celebrated case and led to much controversy. Another was the banning of Shaw's "Black Girl in Search of God."

The stage, as well as the lyric poets, enjoys a far greater freedom than the novelist. For as I pointed out, it seems to me that the written word strikes more terror than the spoken word.

But what Mr. O'Reilly fails to do is to make any case for this censorship. And I would like to make one further point.

It is not only the official but the unofficial censorship which acts as a barrier between the minds of the younger men and women and the world. It is becoming more and more difficult to obtain, either through the bookshops or in the public libraries, literature of importance. I have know booksellers refuse to supply Hobbes's Leviathan, though it was on the university course. The younger generation at our universities is growing up in an atmosphere of thwarted ignorance. Most of them are forced abroad to earn their bread. And it is only then that they come in contact with living ideas. What is the result?

Only too often I have seen it—wholesale revolt. They throw out the baby with the bath water. For many years I have lived abroad and met them there. They are like the over-cared-for child, utterly without resistance. They feel they have been blindfolded and hoodwinked. They cease to believe in anything. I do not say that this is universal, but it is the case with the most active and intelligent minds. Others, frightened, take refuge in an obstinate obscurantism, or hard materialism.

Such a result is to be deplored. The young men and women at the universities are anxious to argue and discuss and explore matters of public and international import. They like to examine and probe into social conditions. Here they are reduced to a parochial outlook. To my way of thinking, which I agree may not be everyone's, there is only one sheet anchor in this present world, the sheet anchor of the Christian Ethic. And the foundation of this belief is free will. Without it there is neither sin nor salvation. I am not prepared to argue out the theological implications. I only state this as a profound personal belief in the face of modern conditions. And by free will I mean the freedom to think and read and discover for oneself, with the knowledge that honest thought can bring no evil to the Christian ideal.

And again I repeat, the work of every Irish writer of *importance* has suffered banning. And once even one book is banned, the booksellers become wary of stocking other books by the same author. They are afraid that they may be a financial losss from one day to the next. The customs officials have stopped boooks coming to me which were not banned, then or since, simply on suspicion. And I was forced to acquiesce in their decision that the book would be harmful to me. I could not argue the

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point. I had never seen the book. I had ordered it on the strength of its reviews in reputable journals. Or been sent it as a present from the United States.

Surely the pitiable little list of those who have so far escaped the censor and the formidable list of those who have been banned speaks for itself. Do men of international standing descend to writing pornography or revel in indecency? Are we to balance Lynn Doyle against such writers as Sean O'Faolain, Sean O'Casey, Frank O'Connor, Liam O'Flaherty, Peadar O'Donnell and others? Not to mention the writers of other countries. I think it is only too obvious that we are the losers.

I plead guilty to one error. The date of Mr. De Valera's coming to power. I was relying simply on a memory always bad at dates. There were so many elections from 1927 to 1932. But it was from the time of Mr. De Valera's reentry into practical politics in 1927 that the forces of reaction gathered way. In the matter of literary censorship, there was support enough on the other side.

I mentioned that the formation of the Board of Censors has been changed. But the results of the change are not in any way apparent. MARGARET BARRINGTON.

THE NEGRO'S FRIENDS

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editors: Mr. Harold A. Stevens, who has been active of late in the Catholic Interracial movement stemming from 20 Vesey Street, wrote THE COMMONWEAL, October 10, a letter which takes off from my note in praise of Father Thomas J. Harte, which was published in your paper September 12. Mr. Stevens lectures me on floating in an intellectual vacuum!

It seems that Mr. Stevens must have overlooked reading the thesis of Father Harte, which I praised. Not what I said, but what Father Harte wrote, is the issue. If Mr. Stevens has reference to my more general impatience with these endless "forums" at which A tells B what C told them both a week before, he is on solid ground.

If he means also, that these propaganda flourishes indulged in by most interracial groups, which consist mainly, in passing the hat and writing your Congressman, are a part of the democratic process, he is right. But I think the communists have about ruined that technique with chain letters, telegrams and telephone calls. Besides, working for a permanent FEPC was not the issue of either my letter about Father Harte's thesis, nor the subject of my article on the Negro and his friends of August 15. The issue was mainly, how to straighten out the tangle in the interracial field and get some real, constructive work done.

If Mr. Stevens wants to get to the bottom of it, he might recall that some eight or nine years ago, I went to some effort to get him to be more active in the Vesey Street group, mainly because I believed that Mr. Stevens could inject a measure of realism into the world of abstractions that characterized Vesey Street conferences. As a young man, a lawyer, and a convert with the sort of zeal that I then had for the Catholic Church, he was my ideal man on horseback for the Negro members of the confession.

Well, time has passed, and once more I am made to feel like Leon Trotsky: expelled, distrusted and placed in a vacuum to be mussed up by a lot of elements that I do not like to play with! Gosh! Still, I recommend that all lay and professional interracialists get busy and read Father Harte's thesis. Address: Catholic University of America, Washington, D. C. It is called "Catholic Organizations Promoting Negro-White Relations in the United States." GEORGE STREATOR.

WARREN OF CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles, Calif.

TO the Editors: Regarding George Dean's article on Governor Earl Warren in THE COMMONWEAL of October 3: Our Governor is not 54 years old, but nearer 57, if we can believe "Who's Who in America."

That Warren might have been running mate to Dewey in '44 is an oft told story. Yet California was FDR's best Northern state, by percentage of total vote, in '32, '36 and '40. Not a freshman Governor, but an often elected United States Senator, Charles L. McNary, from Oregon, the most Republican Coast state, was Willkie's companion in 1940. Oregon gave FDR over 54 perecent of its vote, California gave him over 58. And 57 percent in 1944. With Warren on the Dewey ticket in '44, nobody would rate FDR lower than 53 percent.

Today California is back in the Republican fold. Most any GOP ticket could win here now. FDR is gone, and he left no political successor. Here the pals of Stalin and Tito are leading Democrats. It is, of course, the kiss of death. THOMAS R. LYNCH.

The Stage & Screen

Allegro

IF THIS most heralded and acclaimed Musical Play strikes me as certainly the biggest bore I have ever experienced, I daresay the statement needs some qualification. Oscar Hammerstein II has built a book of the infinitesimal average details of an Average American's life, and together with an appropriate number of experts, has arranged it so that no single one of these details is lacking. As a bundle of blanket in his mother's arms, and surrounded by his grandmother and father, we meet Joseph Taylor Jr. Subsequently we watch this small-town citizen take his first step as a shadow on a silver screen; see him abstracted in a school child ballet; follow him to college and through his early agonies with his only girl; regard his idealistic struggles as a medical student; attend his wedding together with the ghosts of his mother and grandma; learn of his home life and beginning doctor's practice; follow him to a big job in the big city; remark the cumulative corruption of himself and his wife among the wicked rich; make the acquaintance of his savior, a pretty nurse; and finally wave him

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off to his humble birthplace once again—home free!

In view of such an inching survey of a typical Mouse Hero, it seems to me the only question remaining in any thoughtful person's mind will be simply this: Why? I wish I knew. In a small summary of the season, printed here some weeks back, I hazarded the hope that the business would not turn out to be "another movied script." Alas, it is not only another; it is, for all time, *it*. But this is a staged movie without benefit of any camera's editing; in fact, without any editing at all. No single device has been spared to present us all (exactly all) of each year of the hero's thirty-five. A singing chorus sings his events; a speaking chorus speaks them; dancers dance them. A treadmill shoots him on and off with a minimum of effort; an inner stage allows of some two-dimensional action, although this effect is not really examined; a gigantic projection screen quite tastelessly depicts his scenes and weathers; and an unmotivated microphone delivers his disembodied voice. All to familiar music, nursery lyrics, and the motions of (I think I counted right) one-hundred-and-one people. And it is necessary to add that the business does move: Agnes De Mille's direction is neat, planned; each group is becomingly composed, and with no front curtains, each of the necessary exits is fairly accomplished. All in all, the *corn* is so carefully applied, the *gigantica* so firmly supported, the whole is as heavily significant as an embossed tombstone.

With the exception of two ballet numbers charmingly handled by Kathryn Lee, there is no semblance of exuberance, no flash of talent, most of all, no original wit. After hours of action, it is apparent that this is a saga of a Hollywood figment, most certainly schemed to the level of the largest possible movie audience, and projected with as much imitation of the machine medium as could be humanly conceived. I can think of no greater evidence of the stupidity, ignorance, and indifference of contemporary stage criticism than the perfection of this show's failure as a theatre piece. As for its advance ticket sale of $750,000, it seems to me that this sum, measured in terms of disappointment and tedium, must constitute the most reeling body blow the "fabulous invalid" has ever received. (*at the Majestic*)

High Button Shoes

TWO wonderful things occur in this Styne-Cahn-Longstreet musical. A "Bird Watcher's Song," which is by many months one of the funniest numbers I have seen; and an uproarious Mack Sennett Ballet, choreographed by Jerome Robbins, and exactly, nostalgically, splittingly right. Otherwise, I have few recommendations. No partizan of Nanette Fabray's cover-girl attack, or Phil Silvers's lesser Ed Wynnicisms, I thought the book pretty silly, the music nothing at all, and Oliver Smith's settings pretty stupidly over-built. Nevertheless, two moments of delight would seem to be a plethora in the lyric season so far, and I think they should be loudly cherished. (*at the New Century*)

Dear Judas

IT WILL certainly be simpler to assess the dramaturgy of Robinson Jeffers in the forthcoming "Medea" rather than attempting to unravel the motives and values behind the late strange Meyerburg production of his "shocking poem." The business seemed to me wholly a mistake, depending upon an iconoclasm which appeared certainly superficial, and a prosody which could never have been designed to fit into speech. At the same time, the piece did not seem to me to provide an occasion for pulpit promotion, either. If the meek are nowadays driven to seek philosophy in poetry, truth in philosophy, ethics in art, and politics in church, that is the real pulpit point, isn't it? At all events, as this is a theater column, it is necessary to state that the effort was borrowed theater, and small sense, at best. KAPPO PHELAN.

And No Place to Go

THIS WEEK it is mainly a matter of which kind of costumes you prefer; the three latest Hollywood offerings are heavy on the fancy dress, light on the cerebral qualities.

"Forever Amber" has turned out very much as you might expect. Since the plot of Kathleen Winsor's novel was heavily loaded with the events in Amber's love life, the movie adaptation had to skirt around these scenes as best it could. The men in Amber's story (which could have been called "I Know Where I'm Going") flit in and out of the picture until they are killed or disposed of in various ways, and at the end our beautiful and immoral heroine, given the air by Charles II as well as Carlton, the only man she really loved, is a has-been about to content herself with a second-rate date. I suppose the movie is trying to give us the cheap flashiness of the novel with a crime-does-not-pay moral. Frequently the film is beautiful to look at, with its lovely Restoration Period costumes and its exceptionally good technicolor. Linda Darnell is effectively pretty, calculating and vicious in the lead rôle and she is surrounded by many dashing, handsome, well groomed men, best looking of which are Cornel Wilde and Richard Greene, while the most noteworthy performances are turned in by George Sanders as the King and Richard Haydn as the elderly gent whom Amber marries for title and money. In spite of William Perlberg's good production and Otto Preminger's efforts at direction, "Forever Amber" seldom stirs your emotions or becomes interesting as cinema. The plague and the fire, and in fact most of the period atmosphere, are only background for a sketchy story that hardly comes to life. Its meaning, if any, is brought out by Carlton when he sadly admits that it is a sick age in which they are living.

But if it's plot and action you want then *"Green Dolphin Street"* is your meat. You probably won't like the picture any better than I did, but you'll have to admit that Producer Carey Wilson and Director Victor Saville tried to give you everything; in fact so much is crowded into this film that it has hardly any room for real characterization. The plot, based on Elizabeth Goudge's novel, skips about until you are as giddy as the players. Two sisters (Lana Turner and Donna Reed) are in love with the same man. Lana gets him, because when he proposed in a letter from New Zealand, he used the

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wrong sister's name. She goes all the way to New Zealand from St. Pierre in the English Channel; so the man marries her anyway, mainly because his partner (Van Heflin), who was in love with Lana all the time, insists. Richard Hart tries hard to make this rôle believable, and he almost succeeds. If you in the meantime can possibly accept this situation, you can probably take the rest of the film, which includes an earthquake, a war with the natives and a half-dozen other hair-raising episodes in New Zealand, as well as several harrowing events for the sister who is left back home. The nineteenth century costumes and sets in this crowded thriller are much better than the acting, which, except for the oldsters (Frank Morgan, Edmund Gwenn, Gladys Cooper) is not particularly distinguished. "Green Dolphin Street" won't exactly bore you, especially if you like a film in which a lot happens. This one has the works, and if you look hard enough, you may even find the kitchen sink.

Of these three new costume pictures, I preferred *"The Swordsman."* Although it has the same blood and thunder of the other two, it at least has an idea. Set in Scotland at the turn of the seventeenth century, it is mainly concerned with the wars between two clans. And while you realize that eventually the boy (Larry Parks) in one clan and the girl (Ellen Drew) in the other are going to get together and are also going to effect peace between their stupid elders, you can approve of their efforts. You are carried along through a lot of adventures, which except for the kilts and swords may remind you of several of our best "westerns." The exceptionally beautiful scenery (probably California) will also recall other "horse opera" movies. But "The Swordsman" has a good rousing spirit, and if you accept the movie for what it had in mind, you'll enjoy its swashbuckling style, excellent technicolor and highminded theme. Hoot mon!

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

Words and Music*

VINCENT SHEEAN

Worte gehen noch zart am Unsäglichen aus . . .
Und die Musik, immer neu, aus den bebendsten Steinen,
baut im unbrauchbaren Raum ihr vergöttliches Haus.

—Rilke: "Sonnets to Orpheus," II,10.

THE literature of music, when it is not simply biographical or historical, runs headlong into a difficulty so fundamental as to explain, in itself alone, the poverty of the realm. It is precisely because composers think in tone and not words that they compose music, and the effort to translate tone into words, or to clarify tone by means of words, is the labor of Sisyphus. Beethoven said his ideas came to him "in the open air; in the woods; while walking; in the silence of the night; early in the morning; incited by moods which are translated by the poet into words, by me into tones." And when he wrote in his diary a line from Kant—"The moral law within us, and the starry sky above us"—however closely the words suited his mood, it is risky business indeed to say of one precise piece of music or of another that it transmutes or expresses just these words.

There is no substitute for listening to music. Technical analysis may be of some help to the student, although it has a deadening effect unless it is almost continuously pointed up by imaginative writing (as it was with Vincent d'Indy, for instance). The alternative to technical analysis is too often ecstatic and exclamatory "appreciation," the value of which depends entirely upon the reader's stage of development. Several generations of English speaking youth have learned to look with especially reverent eyes upon Leonardo's Gioconda because of a celebrated purple passage by Walter Pater; and yet it is still to be statistically shown that any considerable number of the young persons thus bewitched had a real interest in painting afterwards. Florid prose about music is even easier than about painting, and between these two, the manner which tends to literary vaporings and the manner which tends to almost mathematical technicality, musical literature has wandered and often been lost.

Professor Dent's book on Mozart's operas, first published almost thirty-five years ago, comes to us now in a revised edition which is a model of what such work should be. He is addressing "the general reader rather than the musicologist," and in calm, clear language that seldom rises to undue levels of excitement, he traces the whole work of Mozart for the theater from *La Finta Semplice* (written when the composer was twelve) to *Die Zauberfloete.* This involves a certain amount of literary scholarship on the libretti, as well as that thorough, unassuming musical knowledge which has been Professor Dent's lifelong possession; and it reposes upon deep familiarity with both Mozart's life and his other works and with the general lyric theater of the eighteenth century. It would be difficult to strike a nicer balance between so much knowledge and the public level in this matter. A great deal has been done for the performance and comprehension of Mozart's operas in the past fifteen years, but they still remain outside the ordinary operatic frontiers, and next to the scores themselves, nothing in print could be more useful to a new listener than Dent's book.

Mr. Mason's work on the Beethoven quartets is also the product of a lifetime of knowledge and love, but in his case there has been too copious a rendition. Page after page describes to us progressions which we can perfectly well hear for ourselves on the gramophone, if not in the concert hall, and sometimes the elaboration of the account given does little indeed for Beethoven. An example is the conclusion of the E-flat quartet (Opus 127) as Mr. Mason hears it:

> Through the mystery of the C major chord, veiled by cloudy trills of the violins, steals a timid changeling—with the features, to be sure, of the original theme, but vague where that was positive, shy where that was assured, feeling its hesitant way through the light halves of light beats instead of squarely planting itself on main accents. Each instrument in turn suggests rather than asserts it: first violin in C, second in A flat, cello in E, always *pianissimo*, while the others keep up a murmur of uncertainty. Even

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**Mozart's Operas. A Critical study. Edward J. Dent, Oxford. $5.50.*

The Quartets of Beethoven. Daniel Gregory Mason. Oxford. $4.75.

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> when E flat is at last reached, the viola seems none too sure of itself. But now the murmur becomes more articulate; the harmonies change oftener and more strongly, circling about the dominant; and at last, at the top of a gloriously deliberate climax, the high violin proclaims the subject *fortissimo* for four still more glorious measures, with the A's plumb on the beats, and the bass firmly anchored on the key-note.

One wonders, in reading such passages, for whom they are intended. Surely not for anybody who can listen to the music for himself, above all if he is provided—as Mr. Mason urgently recommends—with good gramophone records and miniature scores. Such pages as the one quoted, and it is not at all exceptional, merely inform us of what we are hearing, without in any respect augmenting our capacity either to hear or to understand. On the other hand the account given of the great C-sharp minor quartet (Opus 131) seems to me much too "interpretative," and voluminously so, particularly in the questions of why Beethoven made certain harmonic progressions rather than others. It could not possibly be read into the score of the quartet without great previous familiarity, and again one wonders for whom Mr. Mason intended it. The explanation may be, of course, that Opus 131 is his favorite quartet—as well it might be—and that he is himself carried away by the multitude of his reflections upon it.

Even more idiosyncratic is the treatment of Opus 133 (*Die Grosse Fuge*). Here Mr. Mason disapproves of Beethoven with considerable asperity, finds the composition of a "strangely hybrid nature," decides that the "harsh confusion of the first fugue" is due to "perverse indifference to mere sound," and so on. Mr. Mason's cure for the agony of a deaf and lonely genius is fairly simple: "It is evident," says he, "that Beethoven's arrogant ego is not getting the chastening and sweetening that free social intercourse with his equals might have given it."

Equals, forsooth! As Miss Dorothy Parker is supposed to have remarked on a dissimilar occasion, where would he have found them?

The territory these two books intend to occupy is contiguous but not identical. Professor Dent is concerned with those who wish to listen to Mozart's operas with more comprehension than would be guaranteed merely by a good dinner, but he does presuppose a certain minimal literacy and general acquaintance with music. He quotes music (usually of Mozart's precursors) to make his points, but it would be quite possible to read his book without knowing C from D. When he gives a harmonic clue to some specific effect, it is most unobtrusive, viz.:

> The little duet for Cherubino and Susanna is admirably constructed; it is always Susanna who takes the lead, first encouraging (modulation to the dominant), then restraining (modulation to the subdominant). Only just at the end does Cherubino burst out into an amusingly passionate expression of puerile chivalry (transition to G minor), and practical Susanna ends the duet as it began.

With Mr. Mason, although he starts by telling us that he wants ordinary music-lovers to study the quartets by the aid of his book, we are often so awash in harmonic progressions that we require not only the score and the gramophone records, but a stern will and firm determination as well, to come through to the end.

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3 p.m.—MEET THE AUTHOR, Authors' Reception.
Rev. Harold C. Gardiner, S.J., Chairman.
8:30 p.m.—CRITICS Panel.
Rev. Joseph F. Cantillon, S.J., Chairman.
Sunday, November 9, 1 to 5 p.m.
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These are the difficulties of writing about great works of musical art. It is such a delight to hear and see *Figaro* or *Don Giovanni* that anything written about them, however strongly it may interest the curious mind, cannot begin to convey the beauty of their form and content. Beethoven's quartet Opus 131 is in itself such a masterpiece of tragic expression that innumerable "interpretations" would fail to say what it says. But so long as the works are loved they will be written about, and so long as there is writing about them it will be read, since from a clue here and a clue there, for we can hope for no more, we may come at last to some sense of the mystery out of which they speak. And it is thus, by a continuous and complicated and never-ending transaction over the generations, that the songs of the masters may (the words are Milton's): ". . . fit audience find, though few."

More Books of the Week

The Proper Bostonians. Cleveland Amory. Dutton. $4.50.

DOWN east in Halifax they have a way of speaking of the "Boston States." This Canadian term, which doubtless originated with the Boston Tories who have been influential in the Maritime Provinces since they took refuge there after the Revolution, is even more expressive of the outlook of the Proper Bostonian than our own well-worn "Hub of the Universe" and "Athens of America." With due deference to this mildly self-centered outlook, the publishers have chosen this volume as the first in a new "Society in America Series," whose volumes are to be "devoted to the important cities and sections of this country," and whose aim is "to portray the individual characteristics, to underscore the idiosyncracies, and to trace the growth of sectional societies with special emphasis on local traditions and on the personalities who embody them." The series, which should help to fill a gap in our national literature merely indicated in most of the W.P.A. Guides and the regional books, has got off to a lively if somewhat superficial start with this account of what any Little New Englander must consider the most interesting topic in American social history.

This book may be banned in Boston, but not for the usual reasons. Mr. Amory is guilty of *lèse-majesté* toward the Proper Bostonians, and names names and tells tales out of school. The New York type of gossip column may be non-existent in Boston, but this book invades private life in a manner not uninfluenced by the School of Winchell. And though the Proper Bostonians now represent only a tiny and diminishing fraction of the Hub's population, they are not yet lacking in influence, nor are the un-Proper Bostonians by any means devoid of respect for them and their tradition. The Beacon Hill bees may well be swarming angrily about the golden hive of the State House this Indian summer, while members of the State Street law firms may be called from their preoccupation with the mysteries of spendthrift trusts and turned loose in the unfamiliar fields of libels and injunctions.

Yet after all Boston may take this deliberately outrageous book quite calmly. Mr. Amory is a Proper Bostonian himself, of Milton, Nahant, and Harvard antecedents, though upon graduation he fled first north to New Hampshire, then south to Philadelphia and Washington, and finally to Arizona in the unknown West, Ultima Thule for a Bostonian. And ever since Dr. Holmes' discourses at the breakfast table, Boston has displayed a surprising ability to take punishment administered by one within its sacred fold. Charles Francis Adams II was not ostracized for remarking of Boston Society: "I have summered it and wintered it; tried it drunk and tried it sober; and, drunk or sober, there's nothing in it—save Boston!"; nor was his brother Henry, for calling its Cambridge part "a social desert that would have starved a polar bear." The Adamses, to whom Mr. Amory devotes a chapter entitled "Family No. 1," have always been notably independent in their attitude toward the Boston of which they form a cherished ornament, but in recent years their traditional attitude has become almost a literary convention, cheerfully accepted in the Hub. John Marquand, whose tone of mingled satire and affection is less subtly echoed by Mr. Amory, has not been banished from the Somerset and the Athenaeum for his dissections of the Bostonian world, while the acidulous Helen Howe is perhaps more eagerly read in Boston than anywhere else. As its nineteenth century power and glory seeps away, Boston consoles itself for its diminished role in the national life by making much of its traditions. Satire of these traditions is now as acceptable as eulogy alone once was, for it serves equally well to remind the hinterland of Boston's uniqueness—and indeed of its existence. For things have come to such a pass with the nation that liking Boston is no longer "like saluting the flag," as one lady of Mr. Amory's acquaintance put it.

Though many alluring bypaths beckoned and there are perhaps too many lapses into anecdotage, Mr. Amory has stuck fairly firmly to his subject—Boston Society with a capital S—though he finds its limits curiously narrow:

> According to the Boston Chamber of Commerce, Boston is 2,350,000 people. Boston Society, according to the Boston *Social Register,* is 8,000 people. Yet according to the strict Proper Bostonian this volume, which admits only one Jewish man and, in a city now 79% Catholic in population, less than a dozen Catholics, is considered impossibly large (a "damned telephone book," according to one Somerset Club member, who regularly returned his copy torn in half to its New York publishers) . . . Operating on the basis of those Families which it has come to regard as First Families—only a few dozen in all—Boston Society is fundamentally less than half of its 8,000 Social Registerites. . . . Not content with excluding some million Bostonians of Irish background, as well as many hundreds of thousands of Bostonians of Italian, Jewish, Polish and other backgrounds, it also cheerfully excludes another several hundred thousand or so of persons whose backgrounds are as undeniably Anglo-Saxon as its First Families' own, and yet, because of imperfectly established connections with a First Family, can never hope to become Proper Bostonians.

But quite correctly Mr. Amory points out that when an outsider thinks of Boston, he thinks of the "Cold Roast Boston" of the Proper Bostonian, who is "still in his own domain regarded in almost all cases with respect and in some instances with actual affection." The late James Byrne, the lawyer son of an Irish contractor, who worked his way through Harvard tutoring the sons of First Families and became the only Irish Catholic member of the Harvard Corporation, found nothing humorous about what Mr. Amory calls "the least endearing of various First Family traits—such as the bluntness of Cabots, the frostiness of Lowells, the tactlessness of Adamses, the perversity of Forbeses, the irascibility of Higginsons, the frugality of Lawrences, etc." Mr. Byrne

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observed: "It is strong stock that can produce the same traits of character in generation after generation. No, I don't laugh at it." Many Americans of widely different backgrounds share this respect, though perhaps more or less grudgingly because of Bostonian smugness, for one of the few stable societies this tumultuous country has produced.

Mr. Amory devotes his first three chapters to establishing and illustrating with a wealth of anecdote—some brash and some too well-worn—the importance of Family, which has resulted in the cult of "grandfather on the brain." Finding the roots of Proper Bostonian Society in the great commercial prosperity of the city in the first half of the nineteenth century, he postulates that every First Family has as founder either a merchant-prince grandfather or a grandfather who followed the Hapsburg policy of marrying what he could not conquer. He then examines the case history of William Appleton, maternal grandfather of both Senator Saltonstall and the late Episcopalian Bishop Lawrence, whose copious diary reveals a conflict between God and Mammon typical of the founding grandfathers. At the age of 75, the great merchant noted: "I can't help seeing openings for profit, neither can I help availing of them. I pray God to keep me from being avaricious, and proud of my success; but I cannot bear the shame of falling below my own powers, and being left behind by those who are not my own equals." And William Appleton used his very last breath to dictate a codicil to his will. This type of man, whose belief that God made him rich and that the prosperous were the righteous, perfectly illustrates Tawney's thesis about Protestantism and capitalism, and he left his heirs, in addition to his dollars, a legacy of toughness, both in business methods and in physical activity. Appleton himself undertook a fourth term in Congress at 74 despite failing health, while 75-year-old Captain John Codman, who had amassed almost a million in the China trade by the time he was 20, rode horseback from Boston to New York in winter to prove to himself that he was not going soft. With this sort of heritage it is not surprising that merchant-grandson Endicott Peabody made a "sacrament of exercise," as one of his Groton masters said, while merchant-grandson Bishop Lawrence lamented at 77 his inability to "run except short distances," though he did not take to using the elevator in his four-story home until he was ill at 85. Thus Mr. Amory traces the development of the Proper Bostonian man from his birth—"he did not just happen, he was planned"—to his death, which he generally faced in the businesslike manner of Colonel Thomas Handasyd Perkins, Jr., who put aside deathbed counsels of repentance with the statement: "I am about as good as Gus Thorndike, Jim Otis, or Charlie Hammond, and almost as good as Frank Codman. I shall go where they go, and there is where I wish to go."

Then Mr. Amory courageously undertakes an analysis of the Proper Bostonian woman. He does not neglect the hats (as unique in their kind as Harvard's), nor the stout low shoes, nor the strange Victorian garments, but he is chiefly concerned with the extraordinary vitality, which clearly stems from the strenuous tradition of the merchant-grandfather. He cites the case of one 70-year-old spinster, who during World War II:

> . . . spent her Mondays and Fridays running ward errands for four hours a day in the Massachusetts General Hospital, her Tuesdays traveling all over town for Boston's Family Welfare Society, and her Thursdays at the Red Cross. The owner of a country place of thirty acres with only a part-time gardener, she liked to keep her Wednesdays and Saturdays "open," as she called them, for gardening, but she also sandwiched in regular work at the heart clinic of another Boston hospital and at the same time managed to keep up with the almost compulsory pursuits of all true Proper Bostonian women—lectures, concerts, indignation meetings, etc.

Remembering Julia Ward Howe's observation that "Life is like a cup of tea, the sugar is all at the bottom," the Boston matron truly finds that life begins at 60.

It was to the Boston woman that the promoter of the first lyceum lectures in the early nineteenth century referred, when he declared: "I will attach a *locomotive* to this lyceum which shall *make it go.*" And the Proper Bostonian woman has been making good causes go ever since. Her zeal for culture, reform, and benefits reminds Mr. Amory of Margaret Fuller's dictum that woman was not born for love alone, but "also born for Truth and Love in their universal energy." A less transcendental explanation of the phenomenal feminine energy to be found in Boston was unconsciously afforded by a merchant-grandfather, married to a well-known reformer, who remarked that "he attended the closer to his own business the more his wife attended to other people's." The Proper Bostonian woman, who was among the first to emancipate herself and is terrifyingly competent in many fields, is frequently as good an executive as any of the merchant-grandfathers. If forced to admit that she cannot do things herself, she proudly and justly announces: "But I can manage those who can." She is a zealous churchwoman who has made Boston the American city of churches. Being invariably Unitarian or Episcopalian herself, she ignores Catholicism, in a city which has the highest proportion of Catholic population in the nation, and also Christian Science, which has its Vatican City around the corner from Symphony Hall, now the chief parade ground for Proper Bostonians. She can only be described as a formidable female, and the record reveals that she has suffered only one notable defeat: her inability to prevent Mrs. Jack Gardner of New York from becoming Boston's greatest *grande dame*. Mr. Amory does full justice to Mrs. Jack, but he does not slight such native products as Helen Choate Bell, who told her friends who loved the country because Thoreau and Emerson did to "go kick a tree for me," and on first seeing a field of asparagus, remarked: "I always thought the cook braided the ends."

Proper Boston's reputation for "wholesale charity and retail penuriousness" is duly justified by Mr. Amory, along with that of having "customs but not manners." He examines Proper Boston's relationship to wine, women, and song (suitably enjoyed in the name of charity); to Harvard and its clubs; to the leaders of its old guard who have a curious way of becoming institutions in their own lifetime; and to a changing world. He even has chapters on the only two crimes which ever rocked Proper Boston: Dr. Parkman's murder and the Sacco-Vanzetti case. And in the end he comes to the conclusion that though "a new age may be dawning in Boston Society," the status quo is not gravely in danger and the Proper Bostonian breed, if more irreverent than of old toward tradition, is still going strong. After all, a Bradford now occupies the State House and a Saltonstall sits in the Senate at Washington. Anyone with a sense of the

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American tradition or who finds comfort in an island of stability in a world in flux will enjoy this book and be gratified by its conclusion—which clearly gratifies Mr. Amory for all his mockings, and no doubt will gratify his Bostonian informants, who "have expressed a keen desire to remain anonymous."

It is unfortunate that the publishers lacked the inspiration of the editors of *Harper's Magazine,* who had advance extracts of this book illustrated by Gluyas Williams, a Proper Bostonian by adoption and like Howells and Mark Howe, a keen student of his environment. For these masterfully ironic drawings this reviewer would cheerfully exchange the hitherto suppressed Sargent portrait of Mrs. Jack Gardner and the endpaper map, "A Bostonian's Idea of the United States of America," which is not up to the level of psycho-cartography attained in "A New Yorker's Idea of the United States." A fuller index would be useful in a book as richly studded with anecdotal plums as a Christmas pudding.

MASON WADE.

From Slavery to Freedom. A History of American Negroes. John Hope Franklin. Knopf. $5.00.

JOHN HOPE FRANKLIN is a young Negro historian who had published four years ago a history of the freedom in North Carolina in the seventy years preceding the Civil War. This time he starts with a general summary of the history of Egypt, Abyssinia and several agricultural and nomad states of West Africa in an effort to find a link between them and the millions of African slaves who made commerce and wealth for the best families of the European nations during the three and a half centuries that followed Christopher Columbus.

"From Slavery to Freedom," then, is what the name implies, providing that we grant the author that the freedom sought has not yet arrived. There is little that is new in this volume, not even the lengthy accounts of the young men who worked for the Federal Government during the early years of the New Deal, and whose exploits seem to take up a disproportionate amount of the space of this book.

Dr. Franklin is not the first writer to trace these African paths. Other writers have sought the same information. The Brazilians, with greater scholarship and under far less pressure than those working here, have explored the Portuguese and Roman Catholic sources with great profit, especially Gilberto Freyre, whose work, "The Masters and the Slaves," will remain for a long time a challenge to American scholarship.

For some reason, the American Negro writers have failed to question the validity of the argument that color and hair define a "race." Thus, the work of scholars like H. J. Fleure, whose paper before the American Geographical Society two years ago points to a new approach (in a couple of hundred years, probably) goes without a taker, while every move is made to find a background for the American slaves from people who *look* alike. Since it is all a matter of millions of years, it might be that the Scotch-Irish who make up the white American South, and the African slaves might be the same people, just a few centuries removed, of course.

Dr. Franklin is out for the most immediate generations, before American slavery, and he has them in the West African traders and slave traders who were their African forebears during the Middle Ages.

But since Dr. Franklin is concerned for the most part with the sort of history that one can write in terms of known people, many of whom are still alive and profit making, we might open up the book with questions about the many hundreds of prominent people whose names he gives this year, while there are still only a handful of Negro scientists of real note, less than a dozen commanders of the Armed Forces, and a baker's dozen of business executives who can be rated above $100,000.

The inquiry could be carried on farther. Who are the great builders, the planners of public works, etc., and on what page will we find them listed? What American Negroes broke the ice in the laundry world, and so on. If there is room for the insurance executive, there is room also for those whose work is equally outstanding, in other equally important business fields.

The point is, Dr. Franklin has recorded mainly those folk whose names appear most often in the weekly press, who have press agents, and whose names appear down the side of letterheads sent out by various welfare organizations.

There is a job to be done by the Negro scholar who can trace the history of the Negro spiritual beyond its Methodist hymnal beginning. There is also need for the un-subsidized Negro historian who can trace the history of the small group of men who float about five or six of the large interracial organizations, and, in a measure, control all federal and state political jobs, North and South, and who also pick the scholarships that are awarded each year and the jobs that the winners will get when the research projects are completed. If it's *history* that we want, there still is a big field left.

The writer takes a personal interest in one item, and confesses that he is not without bias in the matter. Dr. Franklin writes all too briefly of the greatest single achievement of any known Negro in the Armed Forces of this nation, no matter what that man does to the reporters and writers who try to talk with him. Dr. Franklin writes: "On October 25, 1940, Colonel B. O. Davis (Sr.) became the first Negro to be promoted to the rank of Brigadier General; but the election (of President Roosevelt) was too close to convince all Negroes that the promotion was made without political considerations."

The trouble was that this was the only big-time job that the "syndicate" of Negro-White relations experts could not dictate. There were only two or three Negroes in the Armed Forces to choose from, and not a one of them was a Rosenwald Fellow, an Urban League Fellow, an official of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People or the President of a Negro college!

If the job had a "political" angle, so did the situation that kept General MacArthur in the Pacific. Of the men who had been next in line for Brigadier, one had retired several years before, and the other, Colonel Young, who was shunted around a European command in World War I, was dead. Under Davis was his son, who was fresh out of West Point, to which school he was appointed by Oscar DePriest, the first Negro Congressman from Chicago. Was this not also "political?"

Anyway, Dr. Franklin closes his book asking for One Big World, and he wants the American Negro to help the nation better its world approach by some local house cleaning. He is right on that score, but this critic would differ on where to start.

GEORGE STREATOR.

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The Saxon Charm. Frederic Wakeman. Rinehart. $2.75.

THE NEW novel by the author of "The Hucksters" might better have been called "Little Freddy Hits the Big Time." In "The Saxon Charm", Frederic Wakeman of the crew cut and sophomoric wit is as sharp as a steel trap, one set by E. Hemingway, nay, Scott Fitzgerald lo! these many years. The latter named gentlemen are not to be considered with Mr. Wakeman, I hasten to add, but Crew Cut has, it seems, been lightly laved by their ubiquitous back-wash.

Broadway is the author's beat; his hero, an irresistibly evil, fabulously "gifted" director, Matt Saxon. Saxon has, in his subtle heel fashion, seduced so many infatuated demoiselles that his prowess in sex alone establishes an all-time record for amorous gyrations; he is worshiped and despised by the lathered pack for his unerring egotism and charlatanry, and particularly salaamed by one Eric Busch, a fumbling stick of a novelist, also a wow in *his* line, who is dying to put his book on Moliére's sex (that word again!) life on the boards.

As the shennanigans of our devastating hero are described with even worse taste than is found in most vulgar current fiction, I shall not disgust the reader with any of Mr. Wakeman's cheap tricks. Suffice to say that Saxon messes up as many lives as possible, completely dazzles Busch till the latter's wife leaves him, and, all in all, raises a high-tension hell for the numerous "characters" in this unnecessary thud of F. Wakeman's. They are not quite bright, any of these cardboard tramps, and our jaunty author has made no attempt to create any new characterizations out of the standard brand of Broadway bohemian. He is pretty dazzled himself, by all the phonies and their mad, mad alcoholic excursions on land, on sea, and in the air.

It is all very depressing, "The Saxon Charm," a revolting example of vulgarity which has neither the undiluted vigor of sex (I cannot escape that word in this review), nor the satiric kidding of same. Mr. Wakeman's dialogue is most unsophisticated, (and *how* it tries to crackle!); it is humorless and full of echoes. His attitude is parvenu, but, as I mentioned before, he is sharp. Hollywood has paid a neat sum for his unseemly one-night stand. Take my advice, readers, and have no part of it, be it book or film! ELIZABETH JOHNSON.

A Concise History of the Law of Nations. Arthur Nussbaum. Macmillan. $4.50.

THE EAGER idealist approaching the subject of international law might expect to find a comprehensive practical system coordinating the legal intercourse of nations and a body of principles, from which these practical regulations have developed and are developing. And indeed, if he goes to the more specialized works he will find technical expositions of such matters as commercial treaties, aerial navigation, copyright. Generally, however, he will find attention given very largely to such academic subjects as the nature of states, war, territorial waters, etc. He is likely to be impressed by the contrast between the hopeful title and the restricted subject matter.

As this work shows, the present system of international law developed with the rise 400 years ago of nation states from a broken medieval unity. It has been described by Professor Brierly of Oxford as "the sum of rights that a state may claim for itself and its nationals from other states, and of the duties which in consequence it must

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observe towards them." In the early period of its history, Spanish writers such as the Dominican, Vitoria, and the Jesuit, Suarez, considered theological and moral considerations primary, but modern historians and teachers of the subject, sharing the contemporary positivism, look back to hail the gradual freeing of the subject from the shackles of theology. In a world hungering for a more ultimate imperative, their ideal is a purely technical system, a juridical autonomy, in which morality or theology is an intruder. Thus the present writer refers to the work of Grotius as marking the advent of a more modern system of the law of nations, "a law apart from religious sanction, suprasectarian and human in spirit and still embodying the traditions of Christian piety and morality." He asks whether Vitoria is entitled to a position in the history of international law, "considering that international law is a secular discipline of a technical legal character."

This is not the place to discuss further the departmentalization of knowledge in deference to which, it seems, each specialist measures his scientific objectivity by how completely he disregards the world outside his subject. It is enough to say that in the crucial field of international law, where there is no effective supranational jurisdiction, a consideration of moral principles, far from contaminating the sphere of law, alone gives reality to the subject.

Having taught international law for a number of years at Columbia University, the author seeks to provide a brief compendium of important facts and developments for those embarking on the subject. He does not aim to cover the subject in detail; an elaborate bibliography is provided for further study. His approach is, however, a positivist one. As an historical summary, it is very useful, but it is a summary of the rapid secularization of international law, concluding with brief comments on the new inquiries into the fundamentals which "all converge on the task of explaining in strictly scientific terms, that is, without speculative hypotheses and particularly without resort to natural law, the existence and effectiveness of international law." Thus to stem the avalanche of scraps of paper solemnly promulgated and soon forgotten, many international lawyers still continue in the elaboration of scientific categories, without concern with those principles of obligation in the religious and moral order, absolute not relative, categorical not hypothetical, which must be the foundation of the law of nations.

EDWARD LITTLEJOHN.

Donald Attwater's "Christian Churches of the East" which John LaFarge, S.J., reviewed in the October 24 issue is published by Bruce of Milwaukee.

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